Innovation in territorial planning and programming: governance models for inter-municipal network systems

1. Social innovation in territorial policies

At issue are the relationships between territorial heritage and multilevel sectoral policies for the construction of adaptive development scenarios. The new governance of socio-economic processes, compatible with the forms of resignification of the existing, must overcome the rigid discipline of territorial transformations that inhibit spontaneous innovative practices. It is necessary to identify incentive and management devices capable of supporting an active company or part of it, capable of defining a shared path and facilitating its actions even with the necessary corrections along the way. Policies capable of supporting and implementing the forms of management of the existing territorial heritage, though not only economic incentives, which fully involve human capital. The social structure plays a central role in these policies, the culture of the territory which is the basis of sustainable development processes must be implemented.

It is a question of thinking about new ways of social construction for intervention programs, with the experimentation of more advanced forms of participation that do not only concern the technical aspects. Transformative processes that call into question an existing abandoned or underused heritage require specific tools and devices to define and evaluate silent capital together with the new isolated phenomena of resignification. Regional economic planning is also part of this reflection with the recent territorial planning processes aimed at building scenarios for the rebirth of territories, based on the potential of local resources. In the operative devices of programming, the participatory approach to transformations is clearer, to the definition of scenarios that tend to support and do not limit the various initiatives coming from below. Programming tends above all to accompany emerging development, giving strength to the principle of cooperation between public and private.

By making the governance system of territorial transformations more flexible, so as not to create obstacles to emerging projects, effective processes of settlement, economic and environmental enhancement could be ensured. The reflection goes first of all on the nature of the wide area instrument, on its purpose, it must be considered first of all as a tool for understanding the territorial complexity, for deepening the formative dynamics of non-public initiative, secondly as a space project and therefore for the governance of transformations.

By including the local community in the construction of a shared image, common sense is implemented on the space, on the constituent elements, on the explicit and non-evident relationships internal and external to the system. The methods of interaction and formation of consensus between the main actors, institutions or individuals, who participate in the decisions are difficult, given the different administrative levels to be coordinated and the territorial scales to be coherent. Govern networks, establish cooperative relations between public and private sectors, integrate and replace traditional administrative procedures with negotiation and understanding interactions; solicit private resources and skills and guide their evolution towards purposes of collective interest, territorial governance should be based on these aspects. Multilevel associations must be created that share and support a shared territorial strategy. In this process of reactivating contextual, individual and community knowledge (which concerns the territorial resources available from the urban dimension to the open space) it is also necessary to verify the role and effectiveness of participatory tools (social planning tools) initially aimed at self-improvement -knowledge and subsequently self-representation.

2. Resilience through territorial planning

In the articulation between metropolitan city and low-density territory, in the planning system between structural frameworks and operational programs, in the regulatory (for protection) and forecasting (for transformation projects) components from sectoral planning, research is increasingly clear. Effective territorial feedback, as the construction of local projects is increasingly evident in regional planning. A question of
Territoriality emerges in the field of new operational planning; in many regional cases, integrated territorial projects are encouraged as methods of implementation, instrumental to the provision of funding. The issues of the current political debate and recent government decisions focus on complex interventions for the regeneration of inland areas and the sustainable development of complex areas such as metropolitan areas. In these cases, the use of territorial projects capable of condensing a multiplicity of subjects and interests is declared. The thematic fields of interest of contemporary central policies still confirm the two consolidated paradigms: city-center of development, low settlement density-depressed areas.

In Italy, the government of the territory is divided between public vision in planning at the regional and provincial scale, where the competent authorities are the authors of the design and control of the structure and development model. On the other hand, in the territorial planning used in programming, the vision sensitive to topical dynamics considers transformations as the sedimentation of a historical process, dependent on the trends and outcomes of social actions, on the relationships between collective interests and individual intentions, on the dynamic balances between protection and development needs. In both cases, the experiences of consultation and consensus formation perform a specific function first in the knowledge phase of the heritage and then in the redefinition of growth scenarios. The operational programs and the complex intervention programs, albeit with different forms and techniques, express a common basic objective: to produce concrete and relatively fast effects on the processes of territorial transformation. The executive capacity and the activation of interventions are the aspects to be included in the new policies on territorial recycling that give a new value to the existing dimension. The methods of making effective and compatible decisions, the specific forms of implementation and intervention are the crucial issues in governing the recycling of the existing. It is necessary to update and verify the range of themes and objectives, to re-establish a hierarchy between structure frameworks and action programs. Too rigid public will and forecasts can be a limit to the formation of good practices, I can prevent the enhancement of unprecedented opportunities coming from below and from the most creative part of the institutional operators themselves. The modern conception of politics tends towards a "political community", aspires to good governance of space, of activities, of social cohesion. There is no need for a new management tool for the existing one, but it is necessary to contaminate the existing ones with the new approach to the territory, with the new managing themes, this does not only mean resource management but systematization of the present potential through the involvement of the community in reconceptualization actions. Furthermore, the strategic condition of the process, typical of planning, is the necessary condition for the territorial project to infuse the desired effects.

It is necessary to build the dimension, the space in which the choices will be applied, recognizing the prevailing existing actors but also stimulating incipient interests. Relevant subjects are not necessarily endogenous, but all those who fall within the multilevel governance and those who, when appropriately incentivized, can actively integrate into the implementation process. However, the design activity must intercept and recognize the stratification of actions that are already present, by different actors and purposes and on scales that are not always clearly classifiable. Each initiative already activated can turn out to be a resource or a factor penalized for the project as it conditions and guides the proactive action of the process on certain choices. The composition of a project must be measured with a stratification of long-lasting practices but also with the intentions and emerging interventions. In conclusion, the construction of the context is the result of three phases: the identification of the governance networks, the recognition of actions already active or in the process of being launched that influence the local model and finally the strategic reconstruction of the local model of development (coherence framework).